

4/14/00

Dear Commissioner Jane Henney,

I am writing in reference to Docket No. OOP-1211 / CPI. I am strongly opposed to any use of genetically engineered (GE) products or GM's. Their safety has ~~not been proven~~. In fact, emerging studies show GE foods could create new toxins, antibiotic resistance, allergic reactions and other dietary risks for consumers, and therefore should not be "generally recognized as safe (GRAS)"

Common sense would indicate that a potatoe, for instance, which is impregnated with toxic pesticide material and which is registered with the EPA as a pesticide, would not facilitate the growth and development of healthy human beings !!

In addition, statistics show that farmers using pesticide resistant GM's are having to use significantly more pesticide to get the job done (surprise!) Thus certain key persons and groups are making more money but @ what and whose expense? Not to mention that it is further polluting our environment, poisoning our bodies and creating "Superweeds" and pests which are also pesticide + herbicide resistant.

What saddens me is these developments are taking place when it is known that simply restoring the soil to a healthy state would allow the growth of plants strong enough to themselves effectively resist the seemingly overwhelming onslaught of pests and weeds. (See the article: "Modern Miracle Men," on file as Senate Document 264. may be found at <http://www.roundtuit.com/MMM.html>).

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Since it's a "free" country, some might advocate that each farmer can make his/her own choice about GMOS - however, when any GMOS are cultivated, the entire gene pool of that particular plant becomes @ risk due to cross pollination or "genetic drift!" All it takes is a brisk wind or a few bees to carry GMO pollen to non-GMO fields. Organic crops are being contaminated by this "genetic drift"

In fact, in 1999 a Wisconsin organic chips exporter, Terra Prima, was forced to destroy 87,000 bags of chips @ a cost of \$147,000 because they were contaminated with GE corn due to cross pollination.

This cross pollination has led to the death of beneficial insects as well. When researchers @ Cornell University conducted laboratory tests last spring, it resulted in the deaths of nearly half of the monarch caterpillars that ate milkweed leaves dusted with pollen from GE corn.

Common sense tells you that if you turn a good source of food into poison, the bugs that eat it will die. Unfortunately these were beneficial bugs - the pollinators.

Further, there are currently no requirements for labeling of GMOS, at any stage in the agricultural and food production process. Thus even carefully grown organic foods may have been grown from GMO seed, or seed that has been cross pollinated with GMO crops and thereby has become contaminated with GMO traits. Use of GMO's is forcing a gross injustice upon the American people.

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At the very least, the citizens of this supposedly "free" country should have the right to choose whether or not they consume a "Frankenstein" potatoe, corn or soy based food, or whether they take a vaccine just by eating some potatoe chips! But, thanks to the current lack of requirements for Gmo labeling, at every step in the food production chain, they have no way of knowing. Individuals with ethical or religious dietary concerns may be unwittingly consuming foods that contain genes from other species.

Europeans have already placed strict restrictions on the use of Gmo's in their own countries. Could Americans be so blind, or biased, or obsessed with monetary gain that they refuse to do the same? Unlike some forms of pollution that can be cleaned up or contained, genetic pollution is permanent. We cant take back altered genes once they are out there. All life is placed @ risk due to genetic pollution.

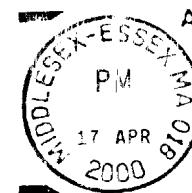
Please exert your full effort to turn the tide on this dangerous issue facing the American people Now! Ban the use of Gmo's completely. Or, at the very least, require strict labeling at every step in the cultivation and food production process and require prudent efforts to separate Gmo farms a significant geographic distance from organic farms which are committed to <sup>in addition,</sup> using organic methods and heritage seed. A moratorium should be imposed on all new GE foods until they are proven safe. Do you want your family eating a potatoe officially classified as a pesticide? Or know I don't.

Sincerely,

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